

14. Apartment Design Standards

Melbourne's apartment building boom is delivering poor outcomes for the city, with a third of new units badly designed and almost half too small. Some of Melbourne's newest developments are up to 10 times as dense as permitted in overseas cities. The existing policies to encourage affordable, well-designed and environmentally friendly apartment buildings are not working in Melbourne.

The Australian Institute of Architects' Victorian president, Peter Malatt, has said tough new design standards were crucial if Melbourne was to avoid "future slums" lining the city's streets.

The state architect's office has developed guidelines governing the size and design of apartments. The draft *Better Apartment Design* rules included minimum ceiling heights and minimum apartment sizes. These are based on standards that apply in Sydney.

The proposed design standards include:

- Minimum sizes (37 sq m for studio apartment, 50 sq m for 1 bedroom flat, 65 sq m for 2 bedroom, 90 sq m for 3 bedroom)
- Minimum ceiling heights (2.7m)
- Eight dwellings per lift
- Minimum storage requirements
- Minimum depth balcony for flats above ground level (2m)
- Noise limits
- Operable external windows for all 1 to 9 level rooms
- All habitable rooms must be naturally ventilated
- Controls on air conditioning units

In the City of Port Phillip we face the terrible threat of a legion of badly designed medium and high rise apartments, in Fishermans bend and generally.

unChain hopes that all candidates and parties will support mandatory design standards for new apartments in Melbourne.